



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

John Finney, President-Humboldt LeRoy Carriere-Roseau Dan Money-Hallock Ben Kleinwachter-Strandquist
Orville Knott, Vice President-Red Lake Falls Daniel Wilkens, Treasurer-Fertile Greg Holmvik-Ada Jerome Deal, Secretary-Wheaton
Naomi Goral, Administrator-Detroit Lakes

RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING

June 16, 2015

Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

President John Finney called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

LeRoy Carriere	Dan Money
Ben Kleinwachter	Orville Knott
Daniel Wilkens	Greg Holmvik
Jerome Deal	

Others present were:

- Naomi Goral, Administrator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Tony Nordby, Engineer – Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Kevin Ruud, Administrator – Wild Rice WD
- Jim Ziegler, Regional Manager – MPCA
- Zach Herrmann, Engineer – Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Chuck Fritz, Director – International Water Institute
- Dr. Jay Leitch
- Morrie Lanning, Barr Engineering, Inc.
- Myron Jesme, Administrator – Red Lake WD
- Rob Sip, Environmental Policy Specialist – MDA
- Jeppe Kjaersgaard, Research Scientist – MDA
- Danny Omdahl, Administrator – Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Dan Weber, Asst. State Conservationist - USDA-NRCS
- Chad Engels, Engineer - Moore Engineering, Inc.
- Nate Dalager, Engineer - HDR Engineering, Inc.
- Keith Weston, Red River Basin Coordinator - USDA-NRCS
- Tracy Halstensgard, Administrator - Roseau River WD
- Ron Adrian, Engineer - Houston Engineering, Inc.

Motion by Manager Knott to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Deal, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Deal to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Kleinwachter, **Carried**.

The bills to be approved as of June 16, 2015 were as follows:

Date	Num	Name	Memo	Amount
06/16/2015	7684	ACS	Phone line, Fax/Internet	152.18
06/16/2015	7685	Bois de Sioux Watershed District	Project Team Reimbursement FY2015	2,135.97
06/16/2015	7686	Buffalo-Red River Watershed District	Project Team Reimbursement FY2015	\$4,134.22
06/16/2015	7687	Buffalo-Red River Watershed District	Project Team Reimbursement FY2015	\$4,373.23
06/16/2015	7688	HDR Engineering, Inc.	Invoice No. 446472-H	\$856.12
06/16/2015	7689	Henry Van Offelen	Meeting Expense - RRBFRWG / 04-29-15	\$39.48
06/16/2015	7690	Houston Engineering, Inc.	TAC - Inv. No. 25046	\$2,627.00
06/16/2015	7691	International Water Institute	BWSR - 1W1P Pay Req. No. 2 (FY15)	\$76,821.60
06/16/2015	7692	Jon Schauer/Consulting Unlimited Inc.	Invoice No. 3488	\$1,170.00
06/16/2015	7693	MCI	Long distance service	\$38.07
06/16/2015	7694	Naomi Goral	Reimbursed Expenses	\$354.20
06/16/2015	7695	Red Lake Watershed District	Project Team Reimbursement FY2015	\$2,310.61
06/16/2015	7696	Red Lake Watershed District	Project Team Reimbursement FY2015	\$3,477.71
06/16/2015	7697	Smith Partners PLLP	Invoice No. 37093, May 2015	\$2,421.26
06/16/2015	7698	Virtual Systems	Invoice No. May 2015-25	\$30.00
06/16/2015	7699	Waypoint Insurance Advisors	Directors & Officers Renewal	\$2,675.00
06/16/2015	7700	Wideth Smith Nolting & Assoc., Inc.	Invoice No. 103519	\$2,756.45
06/16/2015	7701	Bois de Sioux Watershed District	Redpath Project - Pay Req. No. 13	\$9,070.52
06/16/2015	7702	Brandner Printing	Invoice No. 9812-Business Cards	\$78.85
06/16/2015	7703	Marco, Inc.	Photocopier Maintenance - Invoice No. INV2633694	\$280.88
06/16/2015	7704	Red Lake Watershed District	Meeting Expense - RRBFRWG / 06-16-15	\$227.19
06/16/2015	7705	Ronald D. Harnack	Project Coordinator Exp. - June 2015	\$408.14
				\$116,438.68

Motion to approve and pay bills by Manager Knott, **Seconded** by Manager Money, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)

Manager Finney reported that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for partnership between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the RRRA was signed on May 21, 2015 in West Fargo, ND at the RRRA meeting.

The signing ceremony was to formalize the partnership between NRCS and the RRRA for the \$12 million awarded to the RRRA to complete PL566 Small Watershed Program planning in the Red River Basin of the North.

Water Quality Project Monitoring

C. Fritz distributed the IWI Monitoring and Education Activity Report. A proposal was submitted to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) to engage and connect

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elementary and high school students via experiential education and outdoor learning activities to enhance watershed understanding and stewardship. This proposal will use River of Dreams (ROD) and River Explorer activities to get high school and elementary students to interact in shared watershed learning experiences.

PL566 Planning/Economic Process

C. Fritz referred to the discussion that occurred at last month's board meeting regarding retaining an economist to provide guidance to sponsoring local organizations (SLO/WDs) as they proceed with completing the Small Watershed Protection Planning Process. He and Dr. Leitch have discussed developing a plan to merge the Project Team Accelerated Planning Process, Mediation Agreement, Points of Concurrence, and PL566 Small Watershed planning process.

C. Fritz stated that the RRRRA (including the RRWMB and the RRJWRD) has identified numerous watersheds in the Red River of North basin where local districts are planning to apply for and initiate one or more comprehensive watershed planning processes with the intentions of accessing RCPP funds to construct flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement projects. However, there is limited experience in the Red River basin to develop comprehensive watershed plans that meet the NRCS/federal guidelines (e.g. benefit-cost analysis).

Dr. Leitch added that in order to comply with NRCS Small Watershed Program planning guidelines, local comprehensive watershed plans must comply with the National Watershed Program Manuals (NWPM) and Principles and Requirements for Federal Investments in Water Resources in order to ensure federal cost-share funding is available. These plans must initiate specific planning steps and generate information required by the federal government; including an economic analysis of the various reasonable alternatives considered.

C. Fritz further explained that he and Dr. Leitch have discussed initiating an effort using the Green Meadow Project Team (GMPT) and their Resource Team to develop a "Model Plan" that would:

- Merge the GMPT Accelerated Planning Process with the PL566 comprehensive planning process.
- Establish tasks/objectives to reach specific/measurable goals for future PL566 planning efforts.
- Create a template for planning deliverables to be submitted to NRCS for cost-share consideration.
- Ensure local plans adhere to state/federal guidelines/requirements and professional standards.

Manager Finney noted the importance of developing guidelines for project teams/watershed districts in order to ensure that the comprehensive watershed plans meet the NRCS/federal requirements and are completed in a timely and efficient manner. Manager Deal concurred with Manager Finney.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize C. Fritz and Dr. Leitch to develop a "Model Plan" to include a scope of work to merge the Accelerated Planning Process initiated in the Green Meadow watershed with the PL566 Small Watershed Protection Planning Process, **Seconded** by Manager Holmvik, **Carried**.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) / RCPP Proposal

R. Sip discussed a Drainage Water Management (DWM) proposal to leverage federal funds for Minnesota projects through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). The MDA has identified two targeted areas of the state including the Red River basin and the Minnesota River basin.

The purpose of the MDA proposal is to demonstrate that DWM works as a method to store water and minimize nutrient runoff and to evaluate multiple practices and demonstrate the value of conservation practices for flood mitigation and sub-irrigation.

The project components include demonstrating DWM practices in the Red River basin using: saturated buffers, long ponds and other on-farm water storage, sub-irrigation, controls (pumps and control structures), conduct water quality monitoring, evaluate the effectiveness of DWM practices, conduct economic analysis of DWM practices, provide targeted funding to remove financial barriers for implementing DWM practices, and to get practices on the landscape.

R. Sip explained that, in addition to the RRWMB, MDA is approaching other partners for matching funds. The goal is to support a \$4 million dollar project in Minnesota with every dollar invested by partners leveraging a dollar from RCPP. A \$200,000 annual investment for five years from the RRWMB was requested from MDA.

R. Harnack inquired whether other agencies or organizations have been approached to provide funding. R. Sip responded that as the pre-proposal is due July 8th, insufficient time was available to solicit other funding sources.

R. Harnack suggested that the proposal could possibly be coordinated with a Drainage Work Group demonstration project. R. Sip noted that he would be willing to collaborate with another organization on an existing project should it be conducive to the above-referenced project components. Manager Finney directed D. Thul to further discuss the possibilities of a coordinated effort with R. Sip.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. Legislative updates include:

1. **Bonding Bill**: The bonding bill passed in the amount of \$23,549,000 of which \$10,000,000 is for the Otter Tail County lakes flood reduction project. The remaining \$13,549,000 will be prioritized on the MDNR FDR list.
2. **Legacy Bill**: This bill takes three-eighths of one percent of the state sales tax and uses the money to invest in clean water, outdoor heritage, arts and cultural heritage and parks and trails.
 - a. The Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) funding includes funds for the Wild Rice WD's Wild Rice River Restoration and Flood Mitigation Project for \$2.27million, and for the Sand Hill River WD's Fish Habitat Enhancement Project for \$0.990 million.
 - b. The Clean Water Fund (CWF) section of the Legacy Bill includes \$100,000/yr. for the River Watch Program through MPCA. Other significant changes to the CWF by the Legislature include reallocating \$11,000,000 from BWSR's CWF appropriations to SWCDs for buffers and other general administrative and technical support for water quality and conservation efforts on private lands.

3. Environment and Natural Resources and Agricultural Finances Policy Bill:

- a. MDNR: \$264,000/yr. for the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group; and, \$400,000/one-time appropriation for rural and farmstead ring dikes.
- b. MPCA: \$200,000/one-time appropriation to the Red River Basin Commission for the Red River Basin Water Quality Strategy.
- c. BWSR: \$100,000/yr. for the Red River Basin Commission.
- d. BWSR: \$166,000/yr. for the Drainage Work Group (DWG).
- e. Buffers: This initiative passed without changes. There are no obligations or responsibilities for drainage authorities or WDs unless they choose to be involved.
- f. WD Rental and Lease of Lands: This provision provides clarification which is supported by MMB, State Bond Counsel, Attorney General's Office Bond Counsel, RRWMB's legal counsel, and the MDNR.

Administrator Report

A) RRB Flood Damage Reduction Work Group

N. Goral reported that she and J. Finney signed the contract for FY2015 (\$264,000) and forwarded it to the MDNR for final authorization. She's been meeting with H. Van Offelen this month to finalize expenditures to ensure reallocation of the unexpended FY2015 funds prior to year-end as they are unable to be carried forward.

N. Goral stated that she participated on a conference call on Thursday, June 11, 2015 with H. Van Offelen, C. Fritz, R. Sip. D. Olson, and K. Lemke to discuss the possibility of developing an independent website for the Flood Damage Reduction Work Group. An estimate was received from Virtual Systems (K. Lemke), the company that designed and currently hosts and RRWMB's website, to provide this service. The cost to create the website is \$700, with an additional monthly fee of \$30 to host the site.

N. Goral added that discussion of this topic continues to occur at the Work Group and, although other options may be considered, the individuals that participated in this discussion agreed to recommend that the Work Group should consider utilizing a portion of the expended FY2015 budget to fund developing an independent website.

O. Goral noted that the 18th Joint Annual Conference has been scheduled at the Courtyard by Marriott in Moorhead, MN for Wednesday, March 23 – Thursday, March 24, 2016.

B) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, June 16, 2015, following the regular monthly RRWMB meeting, Red Lake WD, Thief River Falls, MN.
2. **Red River Retention Authority (RRRA)**, June 17, 2015, 1:30 p.m., Cass County Highway Department, West Fargo, ND.
3. **2015 MAWD Summer Tour, Duluth – Twin Port's Water: Past, Present, and Future**, Radisson Duluth Harborview, June 24 – 26, 2015.
4. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, August 19, 2015, MnDOT, Detroit Lakes, MN.
5. **FDR Work Group Communications Team Meeting**, August 19, 2015, following the Work Group meeting, MnDOT, Detroit Lakes, MN.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

D. Thul reported that following the retirement of Peter Buessler, MDNR – Northwest Regional Manager, Keith Mykleseth has been named Acting Regional Manager.

District Reports

- The Two Rivers WD reported on the Klondike Clean Water Retention Project. The design planning is moving forward with a hydrologic model completed by HDR Engineering, Inc. Details of each project component are being considered regarding channel size, diversion and inlet ditches, inlet and outlet structures, and size of channels and dikes. NRE goals are being developed with moist soils management units being the primary goal. Protection and preservation of an adjacent rich fen along with water quality enhancements are secondary goals.
- The Red Lake WD reported on the Grand Marais Outlet Restoration Project. Davidson Construction is continuing to finalize Phase I which included the major channel restoration as well as seeding of all RIM and buffered areas.

R.J. Zavoral & Sons are proceeding with the construction of the Phase II portion of the project that includes the construction of the diversion/bypass structure. When Phase II is completed, the structure will successfully divert flows up to a two year event on the Grand Marais Creek to the new restored channel thus bypassing the cut channel that's been in place since the early 1900s. The \$6.1 million dollar project should be completed in July of 2015.

- The Wild Rice WD reported on the Green Meadow Project Team. A response was received from the USACE requesting additional information. The resources team provided additional information to the USACE as requested. A meeting between the resources team and the USACE has been scheduled for June 18, 2015.

District's Funding Requests

No requests for funds were submitted this month.

Other Issues

- Manager Finney reported that the Human Resources Committee met last month following the regular monthly board meeting. The committee agreed on the following items: renew the current Employment Agreement with N. Goral, continue discussions on upcoming retirement and staffing needs of the board, and continue the current arrangement with D. Thul and R. Gjestvang providing interim staffing to the RRRA.
- Manager Wilkens noted that he and Manager Deal attended the Drainage Work Group (DWG) meeting. Topics to be addressed in the upcoming months include LiDAR, the buffer initiative, and redetermination of benefits.

- Manager Kleinwachter added that the Marshall County Engineer informed the MSTRWD that the County was directed by the USACE to discontinue work on a drainage ditch as it was a wetland. The project has been postponed until next year.

The next meeting will be on July 21, 2015, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wild Rice Watershed District, Ada, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 11:55 a.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Goral
Administrator